

SIAM

Siamese / Mr. Ward
AN EARLY THAI BUDDHA 5.31.62

Rec'd from
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OR
AN EARLY BRONZE BUDDHA FROM THAILAND

An early Thai in bronze is now a part

The early art of Southeast Asia reflects the religious and commercial activity of Eastern India from about the third to the tenth centuries. Buddhism and Hinduism, the Gupta style of Northern India and the comparable styles of South India and Ceylon, determined the appearance of Burmese, pre-Thai, early Cambodian and Javanese religious sculpture. In general, the earlier the piece, the closer it is to the dominantly sensuous, flowing and organic style of its Indian prototypes. Many of the early bronze examples from "Farther India" reveal their still provincial origin; but a few images achieve an integrated re-phrasing of Indian style with native overtones. The standing Buddha, with his hands in the teaching gesture known as vitarka mudra, is an appealing figure whose widely spaced eyes, broad nose and somewhat thick lips attest to its origins in what is now Southern Thailand. The Môn peoples, stimulated by Indian emigrants, had established there the great Dvaravati Kingdom from about the sixth to the eleventh centuries. During this period, before the coming of the Thai peoples from the North, numerous Buddhist monuments, enriched with sculptures in stone, stucco and bronze, were constructed. One of their beautiful products was this bronze, probably a private image, in the characteristic high style of the seventh and eighth centuries.

Sherman E. Lee
Curator of Oriental Art

1. 58.334. Height, 8 1/4 inches; bronze with green and blue incrustation; purchase, Norman O. Stone and Ella A. Stone Memorial Fund.
2. The standard work for reference on this and related figures is P. Dupont, L'Archéologie Môn de Dvaravati, Paris, 1959.